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Summary record of the 26th meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Effah Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

Reformulated narrative of section 8 (Legal affairs) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/C.5/56/11/Rev.1)

Reformulated narrative of section 27 C (Office of Human Resources Management) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/C.5/56/10/Rev.1)

1. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the revised text of the reformulated narrative of section 8 (Legal affairs) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/C.5/56/11/Rev.1), said that the mention of the point referred to in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) (A/56/16) concerning subprogrammes 1 and 2 had been omitted from the narrative. The new text of the reformulated narrative related to subprogrammes 1, 2 and 3. He hoped that the revision would enable the Fifth Committee to reach agreement on the text.

2. Introducing the revised text of the reformulated narrative of section 27C (Office of Human Resources Management) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/C.5/56/10/Rev.1), he said that paragraph 2, subparagraph (b), had been revised and that paragraph 2, subparagraphs (f), (g), (h) and (i), did mention General Assembly resolution 55/258.

3. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had hoped that representatives of the Offices concerned would introduce the reformulated narratives since they related to mandated activities and not strictly budgetary aspects. He noted that a representative of the Office of Human Resources Management was present at the meeting, but regretted that the Office of Legal Affairs was not represented. With regard to the revised text of the reformulated narrative of section 8 (A/C.5/56/11/Rev.1), he pointed out that the Egyptian delegation had asked for a revised text that would reflect the recommendation of CPC mentioned in paragraph 120 of its report (A/56/16), which related to all the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of section 8, not only of some of the subprogrammes. He was indignant at the lack of courtesy of the Office of Legal Affairs and said he was concerned about the way in which it had followed up the recommendations of Member States; the Office was, moreover, particularly well placed to know how important it was to respect texts. The revised reformulated narrative of section 27C (Office of Human Resources Management), might serve as a basis for the Fifth Committee's consideration of the question. His delegation could not, however, accept the revised text for section 8 (A/C.5/56/11/Rev.1) and requested a new text which would really be aligned with the recommendation of CPC mentioned in paragraph 120 of its report.

4. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division) explained that the Office of Legal Affairs would certainly be represented during the informal consultations on the narrative with which it was concerned. He pointed out that the revised version of the text (A/C.5/56/11/Rev.1) was not limited to subprogrammes 1 and 2, but also related to subprogramme 3. The Secretariat thought that the text relating to the other subprogrammes could also be revised. The Committee might perhaps wish to study that aspect of the question in informal consultations, with the representative of the Office of Legal Affairs.

5. **Mr. Ramos** (Portugal) proposed that, if there was no objection, the two documents should be studied in the informal consultations of which he was the coordinator.

6. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) explained that he was insisting because the question was important: it involved nothing less than a text aligned with the recommendations of CPC. The recommendation in paragraph 120 of the report of CPC (A/56/16) clearly related to all the subprogrammes of section 8 of the proposed programme budget. Consideration of the document in informal consultations should be based on a second revised version of document A/C.5/56/11; his delegation requested that a second revision should be issued so that the narrative of section 8 would be in conformity with the recommendation of CPC. The Office of Legal Affairs could not have a special exemption from compliance with the recommendations of CPC.

7. **Mr. Bouheddou** (Algeria) shared the view expressed by the Syrian delegation on the question of form. The Office of Legal Affairs should not resort to an intermediary to defend a text which concerned it; it

should come before the Fifth Committee to justify the new formulation submitted.

8. **Mr. Orr** (Canada) said that his delegation was not a member of CPC, a subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council, and that neither the Fifth Committee nor the General Assembly had yet endorsed its recommendations. Those recommendations would only be legally valid when they had been approved, and that might not happen before the Fifth Committee had finished considering the resolution on the proposed programme budget. It was in the context of the consideration of that resolution that the Committee would decide on the formulation of the narratives in question. It would therefore be preferable to consider the text of the reformulated narratives in informal consultations.

9. **The Chairman** said that, in view of the statements made by the Syrian representative and supported by the representative of Algeria, consideration of the two documents would be postponed until they had been discussed in informal consultations, so that the Committee could continue to work on the basis of consensus.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.